

Commissioner's Weekly Field Memo
Friday, May 30, 2014

Notes from Commissioner Gist

1. Six schools receive [mini-grants](#) for school transformation from Permanent School Fund
 2. Charter-school leader selected as 2014 [Heinemann Fellow](#)
-

Action Item Calendar

Today (May 30): District [Teacher of the Year](#) nominations due

Today (May 30): Reports on students taking [PARCC](#) due

Monday (June 2): Preliminary academic or [behavioral-intervention data](#) due

Monday (June 2): [Race to the Top](#) amendments due

June 20: School [Health](#) Reports due

June 20: [Roster verification](#) to be completed

June 23: Academic or [Behavioral-intervention final](#) data due

July 14: [Educator-evaluation data](#) due

July 15: [Housing aid](#) forms due

July 18: [UCOA](#) preliminary data due

September 30: [UCOA FY 2014](#) data due

Notes from Commissioner Gist

1. Six schools receive mini-grants for school transformation from Permanent School Fund

As part of our commitment to accelerating all schools toward greatness, we have focused much of our work on the schools that we have identified as persistently low achieving. As we work with these schools to guide in the development of plans for school transformation, we recognize that many of our lowest-achieving schools face unique or profound challenges and barriers that hinder their progress. To help these schools fulfill the goals of their turnaround plans, last month we announced a program of mini-grants, financed by funds we have drawn from the Permanent School Fund, to help schools meet a one-time, defined need. As a result, through a competitive application process, we are able to award about \$150,000 in funding to six schools in four school districts: the Calcutt Middle School, in Central Falls; the New England Laborers'/Cranston Public Schools Construction and Career Academy; the Agnes B. Hennessey School, in East Providence; and the Robert L. Bailey, IV Elementary School, Esek Hopkins Middle School, and Roger Williams Middle School, in Providence. The grants range from about \$17,000 to about \$30,000. I am confident that these schools will use the mini-grants wisely to advance student achievement.

2. Charter-school leader selected as 2014 Heinemann Fellow

Julie Nora, the director of the International Charter School, has been selected as one of ten educators in the inaugural class of Heinemann Fellows. The Heinemann publishing group describes the fellows as “a talented group of educators who wish to pursue

the shared goal of advancing the teaching profession; membership in the group is not a reward for past accomplishments, but rather an investment in an educator's originality, insight, and potential impact on the teaching profession.” Julie writes that: “As our nation’s schools become increasingly more diverse, I believe that exposure to classroom and school settings such as ICS—where we use an additive, asset orientation towards bilingual education—will be of benefit to Heinemann and the field as well.” Congratulations on this honor and opportunity, Julie!

RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/CommissionerDeborahAGist/FieldMemos.aspx>